ALL SAINTS' DISTRICT CHURCH, STANWAY AND LEXDEN, NEAR COLCHESTER.

This church, of which an engraving has appeared in THE BUILDER, was consecrated on the 8th instant by the Bishop of London, in the presence of nearly 500 persons, including the Venerable Archdeacon Burney, and about sixty of the clergy, and many influential families in the neighbourhood. At the conclusion of the ceremony, the architect, Mr. George Russell French, was introduced to the bishop, when his lordship was pleased to express to him his unqualified approbation of the sacred building, in which feeling the whole of the clergy present seemed to participate, declaring that it might be justly looked upon as a model of its kind. The pulpit, which projects from the wall, and which is accessible from the chancel and vestry, was especially an object of admiration, being of Caen stone, with highly enriched tracery panels, the cornices filled with the ball-flower and the four-leaved flower, and the lower spandrils having palm-branches and crowns carved thereon. The seats of the church are of oak, with low backs, the bench ends in the nave having buttresses, low doors marking the appropriated seats; the ends of the seats in the chancel and of the reading-desk have carved finials. The roofs are open to the ridges, shewing the entire construction of the timbers and boarding, which are stained.

The date of the architecture is that of the middle of the 14th century, when the Decorated style is considered to have reached its height of purity; a style, it is believed, as suitable to small country churches as to a vast cathedral, and admitting of great variety of detail: thus, in All Saints' Church there are not less than seven different patterns of windows, and four of gable crosses, yet all agreeing with each other. In order to make the period chosen appear with the more certainty, portraits (taken from their sculptured effigies) of Edward III., his queen Philippa, and their son, the Black Prince, are introduced among the heads which support the labels on the north side, as is that of Bishop Wykeham (at the east end), the great architect of the great Edward. The series of heads on the north side is chosen to illustrate that passage in the 148th Psalm, "Kings of the earth and all people, princes and all judges of the earth, young men and maidens, old men and children, praise the name of the Lord."

The font, of Caen stone (in which material all the external decorations of the church are executed), has been much admired; it is octagon, having on each side of the bowl varied tracery, within which are symbols of the Trinity, or the dove, the cross, or monograms of the Saviour's name; the pedestal is carved in tracery panels, and the ball-flower is introduced in the cornice.

The font is lined with lead, and has a drain. It is also raised on a platform of Chamberlain's encaustic tiles, the four Evangelists being at the corners, and the riser is formed of glazed tiles, which bear the text—IN : THE : NAME : OF : THE : FATHER : AND : OF : THE : SON : AND : OF THE : HOLY : GHOST. In a small transept (built for an organ) is a triangular gable-light filled with stained glass, the gift of Mrs. John Papillon, and in the chancel is a single-light window, presented by the architect, having a ruby border enriched with the vine-leaf, and the text in old English letters, "Blessed are the poor in spirit, for theirs is the kingdom of heaven:" being the first of the beatitudes occurring in the gospel appointed for All Saints' day. A few points connected with this church have been thus dwelt upon to lead those who are designing ecclesiastical buildings to bestow some study upon their subject in connection with the particular era of architecture chosen for imitation, and thus the antiquary and man of taste will recognize the union of chronology with architecture, and the poorer frequenters of the sacred building will be led to take an interest in that church in which they and their children are henceforth to worship, and the contemplation of the sculptured stone and storied glass will raise their thoughts to that "house not made with hands, eternal in the heavens."

RESTORATION. — The beautiful tombs of the Black Prince, and King Henry IV., in Canterbury Cathedral are to be restored at the expense of the Government.

ROYAL INSTITUTE OF BRITISH ARCHITECTS.

AT an ordinary meeting on Monday evening, the 14th instant, Mr. H. E. Kendall in the chair, Mr. H. R. Ricardo was elected an associate. The foreign secretary introduced Herr Kuhnell, architect of Berlin, who has visited England to study our gas establishments, with reference to the general introduction of gas-lights throughout Berlin. Mr. Donaldson took occasion to state to the meeting, that a number of gentlemen who appreciated the services conferred on the profession by Mr. John Britton contemplated presenting to that gentleman some testimonial of their esteem, and he invited the co-operation of all who thought with them.

Mr. Godwin said, that a preliminary meeting would be called next week; that *pro tempore* he had been requested to act as hon. secretary in conjunction with Mr. Peter Cunningham, and would gladly receive the names of any gentlemen willing to be on the committee. A letter was read from Mr. Wright, associate, inclosing a copy of an advertisement for plans, specifications, and estimate for building a church in Gloucester; wherein the committee offered no premium, would not bind themselves to adopt the best, and in a correspondence, which was also sent, would not say that if a design were selected, the architect would be employed to carry it out. The meeting seemed unanimously of opinion, that the force of impudence could no further go. How much longer architects will encourage the repetition of such insults remains to be seen.

The hon. secretary then read a paper on the formation of a museum of casts, illustrative of the architecture of antiquity and of the middle ages, by Mr. C. H. Wilson, director of the Government School of Design. The writer considered that the extent of the assistance which Government should give to art was an important inquiry. He urged the necessity of having collections of fine models, but cautioned students against a disposition to copy slavishly, now apparent. The Germans, much as had been said of their return to ancient examples, did not imitate so closely as we did; they did not think it necessary, when adopting a particular style, to restrict themselves to the immature details, should it have them. In this he agreed, and thought that, instead of copying dislocated saints, it would be better to introduce correct drawing, and use our improved knowledge. In an architectural museum he should like to see the models take the position in which they properly were; he would have the portico of a building set up full size. He commented on the difficulty of obtaining architectural casts in England, and urged the establishment of a central casting establishment, whence museums and galleries might at once be supplied cheaply. In France this was the case, and the greatest advantages resulted.

After the paper had been read, Mr. Donaldson made some remarks on the points which it had suggested, and especially dwelt on the little interest in such subjects exhibited by English Governments as compared with those of other countries. Amongst other instances, the French had recently sent to Bruges to obtain casts of a very fine chimney-piece, which is in one of the public buildings there. We really did nothing. Look at the ancient monuments in Westminster Abbey, they were rapidly decaying, and even the royal family, who might be supposed to feel especially interested in them, seemed quite careless about the matter. The importance of models was very great; more might be learnt in a museum in an hour than by reading for a day. The question of cost should not be considered,—the education of a people should not be measured by money.

Relative to casts from Gothic buildings, it was mentioned that a modeller had been recently sent into the country by our Government, with authority to take casts from all public buildings, for assistance in the completion of the Houses of Parliament.

AN ANTI-INCLOSURE ASSOCIATION is talked of, and would probably be serviceable. Its claims on public attention should, however, be put forward in milder tones than those of the circular issued by Mr. Henry Dowell Griffiths.

FREEMASONS OF THE CHURCH.

APRIL 8th.—Mr. James Finn, in the chair. Mr. W. G. Rogers exhibited a series of exquisite carvings in oak, by Grinling Gibbons, consisting of books, flowers, medals, &c., from the pulpit of St. Clements Dane. Also a very early carved boss from Winchester Cathedral, and an Italian bronze of the sixteenth century.

A lecture was then delivered by Mr. William Papineau, on architectural chemistry. After regretting the extraordinary apathy the architectural profession had shewn in the acquirement of the collateral sciences bearing upon architecture, the lecturer proceeded to enforce the great importance of their cultivation to the advancement and exaltation of the profession, adducing as a parallel case, the rise of the medical profession from the debased and empirical age of the barber-surgeons to its present high standing and repute, solely by the appointment of standard qualifications in its members, and the gradual extension and elaboration of the circle of knowledge. He dwelt on the close connection of many of these sciences with the theory of architecture, and the important advantages which an intimate knowledge of them must confer on the practical part of the profession.

After strongly urging the importance of the principle laid down and the great good which must eventually accrue to the profession from a more extended and scientific course of study than the ordinary routine through which the majority at present passed, and particularly instancing chemistry as a science at once eminently useful to, and greatly if not entirely neglected by the architect, he proceeded to give an introductory view of the properties of matter and laws of combination, at the same time regretting that the short space of two lectures, necessarily allotted to him, would prevent his entering so fully into details as he could desire, which deficiency he trusted to make good by practical papers contributed from time to time, and by the systematic courses which were in preparation.

ARTISTICAL.

IN a letter recently received from Rome, Mr. Gibson, R.A., states that he is now modelling the statue of the Queen, and that it will be two years before it is finished. Our distinguished countryman is also engaged on a repetition of his statue of "The Hunter," for Lord Yarborough.——Thorwaldsen's statue of Byron, which has occupied a cellar in the London Docks for several years past, in consequence of the refusal of the Dean and Chapter of Westminster to admit it into the Abbey, is destined for the library of Trinity College, Cambridge.——Mr. Lough's colossal figure of her Majesty, for the Royal Exchange, is completed, and is about to be raised to its place.——The exhibition of the New Society of Painters in Water Colours will be opened to the public on Monday.——M. Alost, sent to this country by the King of the French to obtain the portraits of all the members of the London Corporation who attended his Majesty with the address at Windsor, for the purpose of painting a large picture commemorative of it for Versailles, has completed the sketches. The likeness in above thirty of them which we have seen is admirable. A duplicate of the picture will be presented by the king to the city, and be hung in the Guildhall.——The annual meeting of the Art-Union of London will be held on Tuesday next, the 22nd, in Drury-lane Theatre, to receive the committee's report and distribute the amount subscribed for the purchase of works of art. The Duke of Cambridge will take the chair at twelve. We shall give a full report of the proceedings in our next number.

ST. PAUL'S CATHEDRAL.—The porticoes of the western entrance of this splendid cathedral are about to undergo a thorough cleansing and scraping, with a view to removing the incrustation that has settled on the stone work, arising from smoke and dirt. On Tuesday week the scaffolding under the lower portico was erected, and the workmen commenced their operations; it has not, however, yet been determined whether the whole of the western front, as also the other outer portions of the building, will be scraped and cleansed, the lower part being tried first by way of experiment.

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